

## Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up – Jan. 29, 2018

Each week, the Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up will feature hashtags and/or tweets (follow us at [@fundNIH](#)) suggested by members of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) advocacy community. We encourage all readers who are active on social media to use these messages, and welcome suggestions from the community for future issues of the Weekly Round Up. Here's this week's featured tweet:

### **Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research (@FundNIH)**

*The health security of our nation is inseparable from our national security, and the existing discretionary spending caps will hamper our ability to invest fully in health care priorities to keep all Americans safe and healthy, including medical research. #RaiseTheCaps*

#### **1. President Signs Fourth Short-term Spending Bill**

On Jan. 22, House and Senate lawmakers sent the president a short-term spending bill, [H.R. 195](#), that reopened the federal government through Feb. 8. After a three-day standoff, Senate Democrats accepted a deal from Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) to hold a vote on immigration legislation in the days ahead. The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research released a [statement](#) after lawmakers extended funding for the fourth time. The statement highlights that research is critical to patients across the country and says, “While we are pleased that Congress has voted to reopen the government, the ongoing cycle of continuing resolutions creates uncertainty that is disruptive to the long-term endeavor of biomedical research and imposes unnecessary delays on the pathway to cures.” Further, the statement urges lawmakers to “finalize, without any further delay, a bipartisan budget deal that raises the non-defense discretionary caps and enables a final FY 2018 spending bill that provides at least a \$36.1 billion investment in the NIH.”

#### **2. Senate Confirms Alex Azar as Secretary of Health and Human Services**

On Jan. 24, the Senate [voted](#), 55-43, to approve the nomination of Alex Azar to serve as the Secretary Health and Human Services (HHS). His [swearing in ceremony](#) took place on the morning of Jan. 29 in the Oval Office. Most recently, Azar served as a former executive for Eli Lilly & Co. According to press reports, Azar has selected Peter Urbanowicz, former deputy general counsel at HHS during the Bush Administration, to be his chief of staff.

#### **3. NYT Op-Ed: Falling Short on Science**

On Jan. 26, The New York Times [published](#) an op-ed by Maria Zuber, PhD, vice president for research at M.I.T., that reminds readers of the effect of federal budget uncertainty on America's leadership in sciences and technology. After discussing the US as a global competitor, Dr. Zuber writes, “We cannot continue to advance the frontiers of knowledge and lead the world in innovation without funding for students and equipment, and when the only long-term federal commitment is to fiscal uncertainty.”

#### **4. Bloomberg: If Trump Gets His Way, America Won't Be No. 1 in Science Much Longer**

On Jan. 24, Matthew Campbell of Bloomberg [wrote](#) an article that captured the uneasiness of American academics and research executives at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland regarding the United States' dominance in science and technology. In addition to discussing the impact of proposed immigration policies, Campbell also highlights the importance of predictable funding. Jeremy Farrar, director of the Wellcome Trust, says, "Why is the U.S. the world leader today? Because it has had, independent of political persuasion, sustained investment in the basic science and translational science base for 100 years."

#### **5. Bloomberg Tech: The U.S. Drops Out of the Top 10 in Innovation Ranking**

On Jan. 22, Bloomberg Technology posted an [article](#) saying the United States' innovation ranking dropped from ninth to 11<sup>th</sup> place in the 2018 Bloomberg Innovation Index. According to the article, the Bloomberg Index looks at research and development spending and concentration of high-tech public companies to score each country. Robert Atkinson, president of the Information Technology & Innovation Foundation, says that he sees "no evidence to suggest that this trend will not continue," and that "other nations have responded with smart, well-funded innovation policies like better R&D tax incentives, more government funding for research, more funding for technology commercialization initiatives."

#### **6. FasterCures Announces New Executive Director**

On Jan. 23, FasterCures, a Washington, D.C.-based center of the Milken Institute, [announced](#) that Tanisha Carino, PhD, would be joining its organization as executive director. According to a press release from the Milken Institute, Dr. Carino most recently worked for GlaxoSmithKline, a U.K.-based science-led global healthcare company, and also worked for Avalere Health for more than a decade.

#### **7. Call for Golden Goose Award Nominations**

The [Golden Goose Award](#) team is accepting nominations for the 2018 year. The Golden Goose Awards honors federally funded research that may be odd, obscure or serendipitous but ends up having a major impact on society. To submit a nomination, follow [this link](#), or visit [goldengooseaward.org](http://goldengooseaward.org) and click on "nominate" in the top right corner. If submitting a nomination, be prepared to talk about who you are nominating, what unexpected impact the research has had, and which U.S. federal agency funded the work. Nominations are accepted on a rolling basis throughout the year, but for the best chance to be considered for the 2018 award, submit by Jan. 31.

#### **8. Early Bird Registration for COSSA Science Policy Conference and Social Science Advocacy Day – Apr. 30-May 1**

On Apr. 30 to May 1, the Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) is hosting its annual advocacy day in Washington, DC. The [COSSA Science Policy Conference](#) brings

together COSSA members and other stakeholders for a day of discussion about federal policy impacting our science followed by the only annual, coordinated advocacy day in support of all of the social and behavioral sciences. To register and for more information, visit the [COSSA website](#).

*Please Note: If you have information of interest to the NIH advocacy community that you would like to share with the Ad Hoc Group, please forward it to Joe Bañez at [jbanez@aamc.org](mailto:jbanez@aamc.org) or Tannaz Rasouli at [trasouli@aamc.org](mailto:trasouli@aamc.org).*